

## House Republican Press Release

September 19, 2005  
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### Republicans Move to Save New London Homes



HARTFORD – Republican lawmakers today moved to force immediate legislative action to prevent a development agency from evicting New London homeowners from Fort Trumbull to make way for commercial development.

Led by Minority Leader Robert M. Ward, House and Senate Republicans launched their petition drive through the General Assembly to call lawmakers into a special session to initiate a binding moratorium on any eminent domain proceeding. Despite bipartisan non-binding legislative support for the moratorium, the New London Development Corporation this week began evictions in Fort Trumbull to roust residents who challenged the taking of their property all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

“The U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the rights of all states to use eminent domain as they see fit. The legislature has the opportunity, even at this point, to save these property owners from the wrecking ball.” Ward said.

Ward said there has been ample time to address eminent domain issues all summer. He and the Republicans submitted legislation this spring to restrict the taking of private property for economic development. At a minimum, he said, a moratorium on all seizure proceedings in Connecticut is needed in order to block the evictions and prevent the NLDC from charging rent from residents who are still living in their houses.

Ward was flanked by other Republican lawmakers and representatives from the Institute for Justice, the Washington D.C.-based non-profit agency that acted as legal counsel for the plaintiffs before the high court.

Ward said that the petition drive was prompted by the majority Democrats who have publicly endorsed a moratorium but who have refused to actually impose one. A majority of both chambers is required to call for the special session.

The NLDC also issued demands for \$600 in monthly rent for the houses that the people are living in. “The brazen and crass nature in which the New London Development Corporation has treated these citizens of New London is astonishing,” Ward said.

The development agency publicly embraced the moratorium Republicans first proposed in July. Democratic leaders also publicly stated their support on July 11 and mailed letters to every town and city in the state notifying of their position.

“Everyone understood that the moratorium applied to New London,” Ward said.